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## CHRISTMAS 1878.

WHEN we look back upon the events of the past months of 1878, we cannot help feeling that Christmas of this year will be a season of bitter sadness to many poor souls under the sun. Bereaved homes and hearts there will be in thousands; some in sorrow, remembering perhaps the light and happy spirits with which they welcomed the festive season one short year ago. Lonely women seated childless and desolate by wretched fires; moody men in ruined homes with scarce a cinder they can call their own—victims innocent, yet suffering because of the guilt of others. The past year has been one of disaster both on land and water, and its concluding months have brought upon the country a gloom and disaster almost unprecedented. Let the happy individuals whose homes have during the last twelve months been unvisited by death or ruin, remember kindly and pityingly the myriads of their fellow-creatures to whom this Christmas will be no season of gladness, but only a dreadful landmark, serving to shew the difference between what they once were and what they are now. To say nothing of those who were accustomed to live in a princely style, but who now cannot tell where their next meal will be procured, there are many whose wishes were moderate, and whose expenditure was reasonable, who will suffer, certainly from no fault of extravagance or want of principle. Single ladies left in comfort, and with plenty to keep them in genteel circumstances, will have bread watered with tears for their Christmas dinner, and a penury and consuming grief which will shorten life. Orphan girls whose parents perhaps closed their eyes on the world contented that their darlings were placed far above want, will have to face Christmas with empty cupboards and fireless grates. Men, kept all their lives anxious and unhappy because of the extravagance of wives and daughters, will know this Christmas what it is to have neither money nor credit. Wives whose reckless expenditure did much to make matters worse, will sigh

vainly for the thousand Christmas dainties which their souls loved in times past. Never was there a time wherein the words of Scripture are so literally fulfilled, 'Men's hearts fail them for fear.' Time works great wonders, but can scarcely cure the crying evil from which so many are even now suffering. There is no remedy for names disgraced, honour tarnished, and whole families made destitute for life.

We once heard the struggling father of a family declare, with a gravity akin to tears, that no season in all the year was to him so utterly dreadful as Christmas. What with bills from every quarter, which he did not know how to meet; dinners whose viands disagreed with him; parties at home and abroad, where, with an aching heart, he was expected to make himself agreeable; cold weather, which always made him rheumatic, and various other annoyances—he had no comfort or peace, and was driven almost mad; nay he went so far as to say that he hated the very name of Christmas. His wife's bill for dress alone utterly confounded him; and work as hard as he might, every Christmas brought to him the agreeable conviction that 'the kind of thing *could* not go on,' and that inevitable ruin must descend upon him sooner or later.

There is no doubt whatever that our style of living nowadays is much too luxurious, and this persistence in luxury is just what brings matters to a terrible crisis every now and again. There is now but a slight difference appreciable between the middle and upper classes. There is scarcely anything enjoyed by aristocracy which is not also shared in by those in the rank below them. We may not dine off gold plate or drive in splendid carriages or be waited on by liveried servants; but in almost every other respect we are about as well off as Lady A—— or Lord H——. All sorts of dainties are on our tables; our wives and daughters are as well dressed as their betters; and a determination not to be outdone by any one, seems to exist in the minds of most of us. This is all very nice. But if this state of affairs renders our bread-winners anxious, and fills them with positive

embarrassment (which is too often the case), then our desires ought to be limited and our expenditure curbed. As a general rule, this is an age when there is an *embarras de richesses*, as our French neighbours would say; people are overdone, may pretty well stifle with luxury—the absence of which would make them better men and women. Why should homely Mrs B— desire a costume as elaborate as that worn by the Countess of C—? Or why should Mrs W— insist on sending her daughters to a boarding-school which is expensive, because only the very cream of the earth go there? Both Mrs B— and Mrs W— carry their point, after the manner of women; the result being that Messrs B— and W— groan miserably when Christmas approaches, and wonder how on earth they are to keep their heads above water.

'Nothing riles me so much as to have to pay the draper's bill,' said a worried business man one day. 'The immense lot of unnecessary things contained in the nefarious document are beyond my understanding; and when I ask my wife how by any amount of ingenuity she has managed to run up *such* an account, she tells me with exasperating calmness that "lots of things are needed in a house which gentlemen can't understand." Certainly they do not understand; they only know that they must, whether they will or not, bring forth their hardly earned money to pay what seems to them a most exorbitant bill, which might have been half as long by proper care and self-denial.

Some one asserted lately with much vehemence that Christmas was 'a great mistake,' because it was popularly supposed to be a time of mirth, rejoicing, and general ease-taking. 'Whereas,' pursued the grumbler, 'I have always found it a time of heaviness both mental and bodily—a fearful incubus—a season of apprehension, when every ring at the door-bell brought forth a bill, and every letter that the postman delivered was an account.'

Some weather-prophets have been heard to declare that the winter of 1878 will be a long and severe one. If this is to be the case, then Christmas will in all probability have dawned upon drifting snow and icy streams. Those whose fires will burn warmly, and whose board will be covered with good cheer, will doubtless as a counterbalance have had some 'evil things' cast into their lot. But let us, as we draw our chairs nearer to the fire and close the curtains to keep out the bitter winds which oft come straying even into comfortable homes—let us think of those whose sorrow of heart has been this Christmas totally unrelieved by even the ordinary comforts of daily life. Poverty in its most meagre and unlovely form being theirs, what can we say or do to mend it? Let those who have 'enough and to spare' stretch forth kind and bounteous hands to

their less favoured but deserving neighbours—then shall their Christmas fires burn brighter and their Yule dainties taste the sweeter.

## HAROLD RIVERS.

### IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER VII.

It was not till after the candles were lighted next evening that Mr and Mrs Imray saw anything more of Emilia. When they did see her, they could not help noticing how pale and worn she looked; but neither of them spoke of it. Both of them suspected that she was more deeply interested in the story of George Hernshaw's death than she had cared to admit; but they received her as if nothing were the matter. It was not till it was nearly time to say good-night that the topic of the previous evening was referred to in any way.

At length Emilia said: 'You must have thought me very rude last evening, Mr Imray, to run away so abruptly; but really your narrative was almost too much for my nerves. Then leaving you while you were in such a dreadful predicament! That was worse than all. But you will forgive me, will you not, and tell me how you managed to escape—for of course you did escape?'

'Oh, our escape was a very unromantic one,' said Imray. 'I wish I could give you an account of some thrilling adventures on a raft, or tell you how we were taken off the sinking ship by pirates; but my well-known regard for truth compels me to stick to uncompromising facts. To make a long story short, the two boats got safely away from the ship. In them were all the ladies and children, a few of the male passengers, and sufficient sailors to navigate them properly. They were picked up by a homeward-bound vessel about thirty hours after parting from us, and conveyed to Liverpool. The captain's prediction with regard to the *Daphne* was not borne out by facts, else I should not be here to-day to tell you this too true tale. Water-logged as she was, she floated for two days longer, at the end of which time an American barque answered our signals of distress and took us off. The *Daphne* went down within four hours of the last man leaving her.'

'After such a narrow escape, Mr Imray, I wonder that you are not afraid of ever venturing out of sight of land again.'

'The theory of probabilities teaches me that when a man has once run such a risk as I ran, he will never run another like it again. It will be some other fellow's turn next time. That being so, where's the good of worrying?'

Emilia was nerving herself in silence. There was something she wanted to say, but she was afraid that her voice would betray the hidden anxiety underlying her words. 'Do you think, Mr Imray,' she said at last, doing her best to speak slowly and steadily, 'that after this lapse of time there would be any possibility of ascertaining what became of the poor young creature'—her tongue shrank from the word 'wife'—'whom George Hernshaw left behind him in the cabin?'

'You mean his wife?' Emilia made a movement as though something had stung her. 'Well, it is just possible that the owners, Messrs Collins

and Davis, might be able to throw some light on her after-fate. Just possible, I say, but by no means probable.'

'Would you mind, Mr Imray, doing me the great favour of writing to the gentlemen you have just named, and ask them whether they can furnish you with any information by means of which the poor girl's whereabouts might possibly be traced?'

'I will do what I can for you in the matter, Mrs Warren, with the greatest pleasure; but I would not advise you to be very sanguine as to the result.'

After a little more conversation, Emilia said good-night and went. What Mr Imray had told her made clear to her many points that had often troubled her greatly—points that had nothing to do with Harold Rivers's share in the dark story. She now understood why her husband had taken the precaution not to enter his full name on the *Daphne's* books. She now understood why his mother and sister, through whom she had received the news of his death, and who had only given her a cold welcome during his life, had seemed to have so few particulars with which to satisfy her anxious questions—had seemed in fact as though they wished to speak of their mutual loss as little as possible. In their wish to keep his memory sweet, they had hidden from her much that she ought to have been told. She now understood why the five hundred pounds which she had brought her husband on her wedding-day was found after his death to have been all drawn out of the bank, although she had only known of his having had a small portion of it. He had taken it with him in his flight, leaving her almost penniless. She now understood why so many debts, respecting which she knew nothing, should turn up against him after his death. She now understood why he was so anxious that she should not go down to Bristol to see him off. And yet this was the man whose image she had cherished in her heart as that of a demi-god whose heroic stature none other might reach! This was the man whose loss she had never ceased to mourn with tears of the bitterest anguish, feeling and believing that when she lost him the sunshine of her life was gone for ever! Above all, this was he for whose sake she had cast behind her that other love—a love such as can come to no woman twice in a lifetime. Oh, blind, blind, blind!

In the course of about a week, Mr Imray received an answer to his letter from the owners of the *Daphne*. Messrs Collins and Davis had been in communication with Mrs Hershaw immediately after her return to England. Her address at that time was No. 5 Gloddow's Cottages, Foldgate, Hertfordshire; but of her present whereabouts they knew nothing.

The morning following the receipt of this information Emilia started for Foldgate, leaving Daisy in charge of Mrs Imray. It was not without a certain degree of trepidation that she ventured to knock at the door of No. 5 Gloddow's Cottages. As no one answered the knock, she opened the door gently and looked in. What she saw was an old lady sitting on a low stool by the side of her spinning-wheel, and crooning to herself in a low monotone some old-world ditty which doubtless breathed sweet music in her memory. She was dressed in black, with a little coloured shawl

pinned across her shoulders. On her head she wore a poke-bonnet of rusty black silk, such as was fashionable about forty years ago. As Emilia stepped timidly into the cottage, the old dame rose slowly and dropped an old-fashioned courtesy. 'My name, lady, is Betsy Ditton; and I shall be eighty-two come next fourth of December.'

'Pray sit down, Mrs Ditton. I hope you will pardon my intrusion when you hear the errand that has brought me here.'

'I've a many ladies come to see me at times. Some come to read passages; some come to pray; and some come to cheer me with a bit of talk. I like them best that come to talk. But I shouldn't say that, because you're mebbe the new curate's lady, and have come to pray with me.'

'No indeed. I was never in Foldgate in my life before to-day.'

'Very kind to me are the ladies, very kind indeed,' continued the dame, without heeding Emilia's disclaimer, and apparently addressing herself to her spinning-wheel. 'They mostly bring me an ounce or two of tea or a bit of snuff when they come to see me. Very kind indeed.'

Emilia took out her purse and laid half a sovereign on the table. 'I have brought you neither tea nor snuff,' she said; 'but here is something that will buy you a little of both.'

'O thank you, kind lady, thank you much! The blessing of a poor lonely old woman be with you wherever you go! Eighty-two come next fourth of December. Is it prayers or passages this morning, kind lady?'

'Neither one nor the other. I came to see you about—Mrs Hershaw.'

'Oh, about my grandchild Carry. Why, poor Carry's been dead and gone these two years. Father and mother dead too. Except her brother Barney, Carry was the only one left of seven.'

'Dead! Mrs Ditton. I'm very sorry indeed to hear that.'

'Yes. Carry always was of a sickly growth; and after that dreadful business of the wreck, she came to poor granny's, and closed her eyes in this very house.'

'I knew Mr Hershaw very well, also his mother and sister, and that is the reason why I came here to-day about your grand-daughter.'

'And very kind it is of you, lady.'

'You remember Mr George Hershaw, of course?'

'Is it likely I could ever forget him? What laughing eyes he had, and what a pleasant way with him, to be sure! No wonder our Carry lost her heart to him. Their courting was short and sharp. Only two months from the day he first met her coming out of a shop in Tot'n'am Court Road till the day he married her!'

'They were going abroad, were they not, when he met with his death?'

'Yes. George had some money, and it was agreed they should emigrate. He was sick and tired of England, he said. After his death, between four and five hundred pounds was found in the poor lad's pocket-book. This was given to Carry after a time by the people at Bristol; but not till she had let them see her marriage lines. There now, lady, if you haven't gone and split one of your gloves right across! And such pretty ones as they were!'

'Never mind the gloves, Mrs Ditton. I want to hear about your grand-daughter.'

'Thank you kindly mum. Well, the money did us very little good. First one said do this with it; then another said do that. I wanted to buy a little shop; but Carry had her notions, and wanted to be a lady; so she was persuaded to buy some shares. What they were in, I don't know, but they were to bring in a lot of money. But something happened about six months after, and all the money was lost, and we never got a penny. It's enough to make one shake in one's shoes to think what rogues there are in the world that never come to the gallows!'

'And this was the end of poor papa's five hundred pounds!' thought Emilia bitterly. 'The end of the little fortune that he scraped and saved up through many weary years, so that his daughter should not be portionless when she married.'

'And so mum, when we lost our bit of money, if a certain good friend hadn't come forward we shouldn't have known what to do. Perhaps lady, you would like to see poor George's likeness? I've got it in the next room.'

'I should like to see it very much indeed,' answered Emilia with hardly concealed emotion.

The old lady hobbled into the other room, and presently came back holding a framed likeness in one hand, and a bundle of letters tied up with a piece of ribbon in the other. The portrait was a cheap coloured affair, but an excellent likeness for all that, as Emilia saw at a glance.

'Just his smile, ain't it?' said the dame admiringly. 'Just the way he used to shew a glint of his white teeth; and that curl on his forehead as nat'ral as life. Poor Georgie! Poor boy! Here's the letters he wrote to Carry while they were courting,' she continued; 'one every other day, if only just a line or two to tell her when to meet him. They were under my poor girl's pillow when she died.'

Emilia's eyes glanced at the direction of the uppermost letter. Yes; it was in the writing that she remembered so well. A hand of many flourishes. How well she remembered his bold dashing way of crossing his ts, and the fancy scroll-work at the bottom of the envelope, by way of an elegant finish to the address! She turned from letters and likeness with a shudder.

'They say it's an ill wind that blows nobody good,' resumed the old lady, as she sat down again by her wheel. 'When we lost all our money, if it hadn't been for Mr Harral, we shouldn't have been able to pay our rent or make ends meet at all. Mr Harral,' she added by way of explanation, 'knew poor George, and was on board the ship when he met his end.'

A sudden thought struck Emilia. 'What kind of looking gentleman is this Mr Harral?' she asked.

'A tallish pleasant-looking gentleman, with a black beard and moustachers, and with a little scar under his left eye.'

It was as Emilia had thought. 'Does not the gentleman call himself Mr Harold, and not Mr Harral?' she asked.

'Mebbe, mebbe,' said the old lady, rather testily. 'I don't see any difference. I always calls him Mr Harral, and he always answers to it. Well, as I was saying, when we lost our money, Mr Harral he

steps in—he had called on us once or twice before—and he settles a hundred a year on Carry for life—all for poor George's sake, you know. When Carry died, I made up my mind that the money would die with her. But when Mr Harral came, he said "No," said he. "The hundred a year, Mrs Ditton, shall be yours as long as you live." And so it is. The money comes down on the first of every month as reg'lar as the day comes round. I've got it all put away in the bank, all but what's to bury me with—a warm flannel shroud and a oak coffin with brass handles, and everything nice and proper—and the money for that is in a cracked teapot in the other room. Barney—he's a iron-monger by trade—he'll come in for the rest. Not that he knows a word about it. If he did, he'd mebbe wish his old granny dead. He might love my sovereigns better than he loves me.'

#### CHAPTER VIII.

When Emilia got back to Sandport, she found that Mr Imray had been suddenly called away on important business. What ought she to do next? That was a question that she asked herself not once but a thousand times. She knew everything now; and she might have known everything on her wedding-day if she would but have listened to her husband. How blind, how infatuated she must have been ever to have suspected such a man as Harold Rivers of the foul crime she had imputed to him! Was not the knowledge of such a suspicion on her part almost enough in itself to kill the love of any ordinary man? But there had been more, far more than suspicion; there had been a direct charge. Had she not called him assassin to his face? Had she not refused to see him, refused to listen to him, refused even to read his letters? Surely this man must love her with no common love, or he would have learned to hate her long ago. He had never intruded himself on her presence since that memorable day at Spindyke; yet she was aware that since she had come to live at Sandport he had been hovering continually about her—keeping himself out of sight, but still there. Perhaps at that very moment he was within a quarter of a mile of her, and yet she knew not where to find him. What had been the foolish romantic school-girl kind of love that she had felt for the infamous George Warrenner in comparison with this other love, nourished in suffering and watered with tears, that had taken root in her heart from her first meeting with Harold Rivers, and that now overshadowed her life, past and to come?

For the first three or four days after her return to Sandport, she spent nearly all her time out of doors, wandering for hours on the beach, on the cliffs, in the country lanes, dreading and yet hoping that somewhere she might see her husband. But all her wanderings proved in vain. Then at last a sickening despair seized her that through her headstrong folly she had lost the best, the bravest, the truest man she had ever known.

Mrs Imray was clear-sighted enough to see that Emilia was in some great trouble; and whatever silent sympathy could do was done by her to soften the smart of the wounds from which her friend was so evidently suffering. Then, one evening as they two sat together in the twilight, watching the stars come out one by one, and

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listening to the low drowsy booming of the incoming tide, an irresistible impulse came over Emilia. She slid down on a low stool, and with her head resting against Mrs Imray's knee, and with one of that lady's hands clasped in hers, she opened her heart and told everything. What comfort came to her even in the telling! It seemed to lift somewhat of her weight of woe to make another the depositary of her trouble.

Mrs Imray kissed her, and pressed her to her heart when the last word was said. 'And you want me to give you my advice—you want me to tell you what I think you ought to do?' she said.

Emilia's answer was another kiss.

'I think your duty lies before you as clear as daylight. You must find your husband, wherever he may be. If he has gone to Africa or to the North Pole, you must go after him. Having found him, you must tell him that you now know everything; you must tell him how foolish and wrong you have been; you must tell him that you still love him as dearly as ever you did; and you must ask him to take you to his heart again.'

'I cannot—I dare not do it.'

'You must.'

'Supposing he refuses; supposing'—

'We will suppose nothing, if you please. We will do the duty that lies clearly before us, however hard it may be. It will be time enough to deal with suppositions when he has refused.'

'Oh! if I only thought'—and Emilia paused.

'Think as little as possible. What you have to do now is to act.'

'He cannot—he will not forgive me!'

'I am by no means so sure on that point. I have found that as a rule, men are very soft-hearted, and may generally be led by the nose if you only know the proper way to approach them.'

'How I wish I had your tact and knowledge of the world.'

'Don't wish for anything of the kind, dear. Experience keeps a dear school—you know the proverb.—But here comes Mary with candles.'

Emilia slept that night more happily than she had done for weeks.

Mrs Imray followed up her advice next morning by urging Emilia at once to set out on her quest. This Emilia would not agree to do till she had got her friend's promise to accompany her.

Mrs Imray agreed without much difficulty; and arrangements having been made for the due and proper care of the children, they started for London by the five o'clock train. It was too late for anything to be done that evening. Next forenoon they took a cab and were driven out as far as Chestnut Bank. The plot was that Mrs Imray should call on Mrs Rivers and obtain from that lady her brother-in-law's address, as being wanted for a matter of much importance. But the plot came to nothing, for on reaching the gate, they found a board staring them in the face with a notice that the place was to let. There was nothing for it but to drive back to town and go to Harold's chambers in Bruton Street. This Emilia rather shrank from doing; but Mrs Imray would admit of no hesitation in the matter. It was she who knocked at the door, and she who

questioned the housekeeper, while Emilia sat quaking in the cab a little distance away.

But all Emilia's own fears and tremors were forgotten as soon as she saw her friend's face. She grew cold in a moment from head to foot. 'Tell me the worst at once,' she said. 'Is he—is he?'

'No dear; he is not dead. But he has met with a very dreadful accident, and he is lying in — Hospital. That was the nearest place, and he was taken there.' Then she turned to the cabman: 'Drive to — Hospital as fast as you can,' she said. As soon as she was seated in the cab, she explained: 'From what I can make out, it would appear that as Mr Rivers was crossing the street the other day, he saw an old woman in danger of being run over. In attempting to save her he was run over himself and very badly hurt. At present it would not be safe to move him from the hospital. The housekeeper sent down yesterday to inquire after him; but of course the hospital people would say nothing definite except that the case was a very bad one. But we must hope for the best dear; that is always the truest wisdom.'

Emilia sat white and silent, clasping her friend's hand very tightly till they reached the hospital. Here a terrible disappointment awaited them. The morrow was the day for admitting the public. They could not be allowed to enter. 'But I am his wife, and I must see him,' said Emilia with energy.

The porter merely shrugged his shoulders, and went in search of some one higher in authority. That some one proved to be a pleasant gentlemanly young fellow, probably one of the students.

'I am very sorry, madam, that we cannot admit you. As it happens, Mr Rivers has just fallen into a refreshing sleep, the first since his accident; and we hope great things from it if he is not disturbed. Everything just now depends on his being kept perfectly quiet.'

Emilia had a dozen questions to ask, to which she received obliging if somewhat evasive replies. Then she was obliged to go. Few wives who love their husbands will envy her feelings that night. Mrs Imray's reiterated assurance that Harold was far better off where he was than he would have been at home—that he was far more likely to recover at the hospital than anywhere else, seemed but a poor consolation to her. She pictured her husband lying on a pallet in the bare white-washed ward, one of twenty other poor creatures, with nothing but strange faces about him, and she, his wife, impotent to help him. It was torture!

Emilia and Mrs Imray were at the hospital doors to a minute next day. 'Courage!' whispered Mrs Imray to her friend as they walked along the broad passage that led to the wards. 'You must control yourself for his sake. Remember what the doctor said—that all excitement was dangerous to him.' Next moment they paused on the threshold of the ward. Emilia's eye roved over the beds in search of a well-remembered face. Next moment she saw it; but oh, how changed from when she saw it last! A little sob came into her throat as she looked. Then, with a last squeeze of her friend's hand, she walked slowly up the aisle that divided one row of beds from

the other, and stopped opposite the foot of Harold's pallet. He had been looking another way and did not see her till she stopped. Then, when he did see her, first his eyes, and then his whole face lighted up and became as it were transfigured. With a little inarticulate cry he stretched out both his arms towards her, as he had stretched them out on that day when she had spurned him. Next moment she was on her knees by his bed, and his arms were round her neck. 'O darling—husband—can you forgive me and take me to your heart again, never to leave you more?' she murmured. 'Oh, is it possible that you can forgive me?'

He drew her face, wet with tears, up to his, and kissed it passionately. 'Let that be my answer,' he whispered. 'The past from to-day is dead and buried.' Then with trembling fingers, for he was very weak, he felt for a ribbon that hung round his neck. On it was the wedding ring which she had flung from her in her passion that afternoon at Dover. Her heart was so full that she buried her face in the coverlet and did not dare to look at it. Then Harold undid the ribbon and slid the ring back on the unresisting finger from which it ought never to have been taken. Then he kissed the ring and the finger, and then he drew his wife still closer to him, and there was peace between them.

#### NANNY EGGAR.

Of all the curious remembrances of a childhood spent in one of the south-eastern counties of Scotland, perhaps the most striking is that retained in my mind by the image of Nanny Eggar. Picture to yourself, reader, a woman of six feet, with masculine features, vacant eyes, and tremendous strength of sinew, and you will have some idea of Nanny as she was when first I beheld her. She was always dressed in the same garments, which never seemed to wear out; but were invariably dirty, though, as far as I remember, never ragged. Her dress was a ploughman's coat, with a curious scarlet vest, and a skirt of some dark-blue material. On her head she wore a large straw-hat, which flapped to and fro round her fantastic features as she walked, or rather strode along. There was a walk which in early youth I was very fond of; it was called the Fir-wood Road, thick plantations of those trees fringing it on each side. It was not by any means a cheerful walk, yet there was something fascinating in it to my mind, partly because there I found many rare wild-flowers, and partly because I was sure to meet Nanny Eggar stalking along like some weird and ungainly creature belonging to a different sphere.

How Nanny lived, we never could make out. She had no regular place of abode, but went wandering wherever her wild will led her, like a sort of modern Meg Merrilies. In winter she generally crept for a night's lodging into any old barn or outhouse belonging to the many farms in the neighbourhood. Sometimes she would sleep beneath the shelter of a stack; and in summer the woods were her favourite haunts both by night and day. Quite in the bosom of the fir-wood

was a little farm-place called Blaw-wearie; a most appropriate name; for here the *sough* of the winter winds was heard in full force. The farmer was poor and had much ado to live. Not far from the house stood a little ruined cottage with infirm door and broken windows. When Nanny settled for a while, which was an event of rare occurrence, or when she was indisposed in any way, she made this ruined hut her stronghold, lighting some sort of rude fire in the grateless hearth, and sleeping on a rough bedstead put in stealthily by the homely farmer's wife. One odd feature in Nanny's character was a dislike to receive attention from any one. As soon as she felt herself an object of remark or solicitude, she vanished from the neighbourhood and did not appear again for a considerable time.

The three or four cotters' families who constituted the only labourers on the small farm were on the whole considerate and kind to Nanny, the bairns being sent now and then, when her back was turned, to place some little article of food inside the poor dwelling; for if Nanny found anything, she ate it without remark; though if the giver had appeared bodily, she would have resented the intrusion, as well as rejected the article bestowed. Once or twice some bold urchins ventured near the broken window and threw stones at Nanny as she crouched by her miserable hearth; but they never tried it again, for the enraged and desolate creature rushed out on them with such a look of wild fury on her face, that they fled for their lives and never ventured near her in future.

Of Nanny's history little was known, and that little was mostly conjecture. She was said to have come from Northumberland originally, and to have belonged to a tribe of gipsies. But no one knew much about her. She seldom spoke to any one, but strode about the country roads with her vacant stare, not looking to right or left, but gazing blankly into far distance. No one cared to disturb her. A single glance at her mighty frame and masculine face convinced any who were disposed to injure her, that she was not to be trifled with. She especially avoided men; passing them, if they happened to be in her way, with a disdainful toss of her broad-brimmed hat, and increasing the speed of her gigantic stride till she was out of their sight. People conjectured from this that Nanny must have in her youth received some slight from a faithless swain, though it was difficult to believe that she ever could have had beauty to attract an admirer. It was a happy day for Nanny if she found a pheasant's nest or a snared rabbit. The booty was quickly transferred to a large wallet which, after the manner of Edie Ochiltree, she carried for the reception of all sorts of things. The only time I ever heard her speak was when she had chanced to pick up a dead hare, which had somehow escaped the keeper's notice. Striding up to me with a singular smile, she undid her wallet, and drawing out the hare, she exclaimed in a sort of high treble: 'Ech, lassie!

see what I've gotten!' and quickly replacing it with a sort of elf-like screech, she strode on her way.

How she managed to cook this or any other food, no one knew. Some said she ate her food raw. This however, I did not believe. A glance I once took in at her window shewed me a small iron pot, which would probably cook everything. Of course she never entered a church; such a thing was not to be expected from one who seemed profoundly to hate human society, and whose worship of God (if she had any) must have been conducted after a lonely fashion of her own in the great wide temple of Nature. Poor creature! I think she must have been harmless and simple, if unprovoked; at all events she never gratuitously annoyed any one, though her aspect was sufficiently terrifying to alarm those who did not know her solitary and innocent life.

We never could make out how Nanny got her clothes to hold together; she must have mended them surely in some secret way; yet her large rough hands seemed singularly unfitted to handle feminine implements. The only article that could be called ornamental about Nanny's person was a curious old handkerchief with embroidered silken flowers, which she wore knotted loosely about her neck, and which seemed a sort of remnant of better days, and much out of keeping with the rest of her clumsy costume.

The summer had been an unusually hot one; a sort of low fever prevailed in the neighbourhood of the Fir-wood farm; the farmer's wife and children and some of the few cottagers were sharply visited, and one child belonging to a ploughman died. Strange to say, Nanny was absent all the time of the fever. Some sort of horror of the place came over her; and no one saw her till the beginning of winter, when she again resumed her place in the tumble-down cottage. The farmer's wife and family had left Blaw-wearie for months, as a complete change of air had been recommended for them; new ploughmen had come to the cottages, and a new servant did the work of the farmhouse. Things were a little neglected, as they are apt to be when a mistress is absent; so Nanny's dole of milk and meal, which used to be placed so unfailingly within the threshold of the hut, was forgotten; and the poor creature was at this time often sadly hungry and ill-off.

The new people at the cottages had heard some rumour that Nanny 'wasna canny,' and with the superstition which still clings to the labouring class in Scotland, they feared and hated the poor creature. One day an urchin standing at a cottage door thought it would be fine fun to throw stones at the broken window of Nanny's hut. No sooner thought of than done. The venturesome youth had thrown five or six big stones pretty successfully, and was stooping to get a good-sized one for his next throw, when Nanny issuing frantically from her shattered door, came over in three strides to the delinquent, seized him vigorously by the collar, and without a moment's hesitation, plunged him, head downwards, into a large tub of warm and dirty soap-suds which some matron had left standing at her door. Leaving the struggling youngster there, Nanny uttered one of her singularly 'eldrich' screeches, and strode back into her humble mansion. From that day Nanny's

peace was at an end. Old and young in the very small community seemed determined after this to play mischievous tricks to vex her, as young ragamuffins are apt to do. Many were the ingenious devices hit upon to disturb and annoy the lonely woman, so that in the latter months of her life she was at perpetual warfare with those around her.

At this juncture the farmer, who had been ailing for some time, and was tired of living alone, sent for his wife and children. They returned one bleak day in December, when threatening snow-clouds seemed to presage a severe storm. Darkness set in; it snowed heavily all night, and in the morning the driving wind blocked up the roads from hedge to hedge with snow. The farmer's wife had many things to arrange after her long absence, and never once thought of Nanny her poor neighbour. So that day passed, and the cold grew more bitter, while now and again the snow fell more heavily. At breakfast-time, while the farmer's family sat eating their homely meal of porridge and milk, Alec, the youngest, said: 'Mother, have ye minded Nanny's pickle meal an' her drap milk?'

'Eh, laddie, no!' cried the housewife, starting up. 'Gang an' ask Peggy if the creature's had it when I was away.'

'Peggy says,' screamed the urchin when he returned, 'that she never knew there was anybody ca'd Nanny Eggar, an' she never gave her milk or meal!'

The gudewife darted a reproachful look at her husband, put on a thick shawl and strong boots and ran down the road. She stopped before Nanny's poor broken window, peeped in, and saw—What? A heap of snow upon the floor (it had apparently come down the chimney and through the crevices of the wretched door); and in the corner, on the low bedstead, lay the prostrate form of poor Nanny. Entering hastily, the good-hearted woman advanced to the side of the pallet, raised the large rough hand, dropped it at once, and uttered a pitiful cry. Nanny Eggar was dead, dead without making a sign or seeking help, and with fellow-beings within a yard or two of her dwelling. There was not a scrap of anything eatable in the house. Too proud to the last to beg for a dole, she seemed to have yielded at once to cold and hunger.

Many a bitter tear was shed by the kind 'mistress' that night; and it was many long days before the farmer of Blaw-wearie was suffered to forget his neglect of this poor waif of humanity. He buried her decently in the little country churchyard, not far away, and followed her remains to the grave. Nor could he ever divest himself of the idea that he was little short of Nanny's murderer, so severely did he blame himself for his neglect.

On Nanny's breast, fastened round her neck by a faded ribbon, was found a little crystal locket of antique form, which inclosed a lock of jet-black hair. This was buried with her; and no further clue was ever found to the history of this strange unnatural being. The only articles, except the bedstead, found in the desolate hut were the little iron pot and a small 'creepie' or stool; which are both still preserved as mementoes in Blaw-wearie kitchen. The old hut where the gaunt and homeless wanderer crouched like a wild creature



for shelter, is now roofless; and only at the farmer's hearth is remembered the brief little story of poor Nanny Eggar's strange life and pitiful death.

#### SOME SOCIAL NOTES.

THE damage done to the foreign trade of Great Britain by the deterioration in manufacture is becoming matter of lament; and no wonder. The character of the country suffers through the scandalous proceedings of certain producers, who palm off articles for what they are not. This is particularly the case as regards some kinds of cotton goods, to which is given an appearance of weight and thickness by being loaded with china-clay, that is liable to be rubbed off by the slightest wear. The same thing is done with some varieties of silk-goods, which are doctored in a most extraordinary manner. All this is, of course, a swindle; and in the long-run, not only the reputation of the actual perpetrators, but of the nation to which they belong, is injured.

A member of parliament, Mr P. Miller, lately addressing his constituents at Ashton-under-Lyne on the depression of trade, took occasion to allude to this shameful system of adulteration. He said: 'He would tell them what it was that prevented our cotton cloth going to India. It was the rascality that was practised at Blackburn and elsewhere. (Applause.) He read the other day a case which came before the judge of the Rochdale County Court. Instead of the cloth being adulterated with forty-six or forty-seven per cent. of china-clay, which had always been considered to be the *maximum*, it was adulterated to the extent of two hundred per cent. That was one way of cheapening the article. Mrs Brassey, in her pleasant book descriptive of her voyage, stated that in crossing the Indian Ocean she observed the engineer of the vessel decorating his turban with muslin, and she asked him whether it was English muslin. "No," he said; "it was from Switzerland; the English made his fingers stick; it was gummy." (Laughter.) Such was the state of the Blackburn trade. He wanted to know how these people reconciled these practices with the sending out of missions to enlighten the Indians. (Hear, hear.) What would be thought of a missionary going with an eight-and-a-quarter shirting under one arm and a Bible under the other? (Laughter.) It would be a proper question to ask, Did the missionary practise what he preached? Indian piece-goods, they were told, did not make much progress; but that in course of time the native cotton-mills would evidently find good customers for their shirtings in the neighbouring countries, and Manchester piece-goods were, it was said, clearly not liked. We were further told that sometimes the local makes of Bombay twist had sold at higher rates than the same quality of English yarns. If this were the case, the outlook was deplorable, and he thought it was high time, if we were to maintain our place as a manufacturing nation, that steps should be taken to avoid the possibility of our losing our position; and this could only be done by a stricter regard to honesty of manufacture.

Independently of loss of trade from causes now stated, there is a falling off from the simple reason that some foreign nations are now able to

rival our manufactures, and execute certain kinds of work cheaper. America is fast driving us out of the field in many departments. For instance, American upholsterers are sending consignments of ready-made furniture from kitchen chairs to drawing-room settees, which are not only cheaper, but stand more wear and tear than articles of a similar class made here. Undertakers are even importing cheap ready-made coffins, with which it is said the native article cannot bear comparison—all of which is chiefly owing to skilled labour being greatly dispensed with in America, and cheap machinery being substituted for manual dexterity. However, though British trade has of late continued to decrease, there is some consolation in the fact that our mercantile navy is equal to that of all the rest of the world combined. It is a great earning power, and constitutes us the great carriers of the world. It is satisfactory to think that we have the most magnificent fleet of steamers in the world, which in the event of war could be turned to good account. Taking this into consideration, the often repeated statement that there is some danger of this country being beaten in ship-building by the foreigner will not easily be credited; and indeed statistics go far to shew that foreign competition has not as yet done us much harm. Of the total tonnage of the Austrian Lloyd's fleet, two-thirds are said to be British built, while the fleets of the Messageries Imperiales, the Compagnie Transatlantique, the Netherlands India Company, and the North German Lloyd's, mainly come from the same source. A convincing instance of English superiority in ship-building is found in the case of the British Indian Steam-navigation Company, which some time ago invited tenders from the whole world for constructing twenty-one thousand seven hundred and fifty-nine tons of shipping. With the exception of a single vessel, the whole fleet was, we believe, supplied by the great yards of the Clyde. But satisfactory as all this appears, it by no means proves that the high price of labour in England compared with continental countries will not tell its tale in the long-run, and enable the foreigner eventually to take much of the trade out of our hands.

Apocryphal of the mercantile marine, some good work has lately been done under the Merchant Shipping Act. In a short time after the Act came into operation, more than a hundred vessels, most of them wooden ships, were detained for alleged defects in hull, equipment, or machinery. When the measure was under discussion, a great deal was said of the vexatious obstacles which would be thrown in the way of the ship-owners by the detention of their vessels on the most groundless pretexts; but these apprehensions have not been realised. Up to the time we speak of, in eighteen cases only has the complaint proceeded from the crews for instance, and in every case the vessel so reported was found to be unsafe, and other persons have interfered to a much less extent than was anticipated. Out of the eighty-two vessels detained at the instance of the Board of Trade officers, all but three of that number were pronounced unsafe; so that while mistakes have been few, the Act has evidently had an important influence in checking the dangerous practice of overloading, under which head steamers seem to be the chief offenders. It is to be hoped there-



fore, that the days of Coffin-ships, an account of which has already appeared in these pages, are numbered.

The amount of pauperism shews how the long stagnation of trade has told on the humbler ranks of the community. The paupers in our metropolis alone are equal in number to what would be considered a large army even in these days. It has often been a subject of controversy whether pauper children in after-life do or do not turn out badly in so great a majority of cases as to condemn the principle of pauper education as at present conducted in England. From strict investigation it appears that the present system of schools is at anyrate capable of shewing results which, all things considered, are excellent. The boys are apprenticed to all sorts of trades, and the girls generally placed in domestic service; a careful system of visiting the children every six months being carried out by the guardians until the boys are out of their apprenticeship and the girls are eighteen years of age. In almost every case the reports of the inspectors shew that the children's subsequent careers have been satisfactory; a proof that the Swinton schools in Manchester, from which this account reaches us, are doing as solid beneficial work as any school public or private, charitable or pauper. With the increase of pauperism, drink—so well called the curse of this country—has as we know much to do; but it is satisfactory to learn that as regards London at least, the condition of the drunken and disorderly classes is lately reported to have undergone some improvement.

That the supplier of the poor man's beer is often no less an offender against the law than the consumer, was shewn not long since, when out of ninety samples of beer and of materials used in the brewing, fully two-thirds were either adulterated or consisted of illegal ingredients. The number of shopkeepers so frequently convicted in large towns for using false weights and scales, also gives us an idea of the extent to which robbery regarding food as well as drink is carried on. It may here be mentioned that numbers of secret stills are now believed to be at work, to an extent unknown for many years. At anyrate the number of seizures that have been made within the last few years would appear to indicate a considerable revival of this branch of smuggling. The suppression of secret stills in Ireland has given the authorities some trouble; but it is not only the Irish bog and mountain that offer security to the illicit distiller, but the secret haunts of our large and populous towns.

In climates like our own it may be remarked, many people have few resources for their leisure hours besides drinking; and as high wages supply the means of this indulgence, there arise excitement, overmastered judgment, and finally violence. That the majority of our criminals have been drawn from the most ignorant of our population, is certain; but it is a notorious fact that late revelations scarcely bear out the optimist view that the spread of education will gradually extirpate crime. They rather tend to prove that a little learning may still be considered a dangerous thing. Coining, for example, is still greatly confined to the educated classes; and it may be broadly laid down that the majority of fairly and even well educated criminals run towards theft, fraud, and

forgery, and of the imperfectly instructed towards miscellaneous crimes from vagrancy to murder. Education as a rule operates much more powerfully as a restraining influence on over-indulgence in drink among women than among men; but amongst the imperfectly educated there appears to be little difference between the sexes in their disposition to this vice; while amongst those who have had no education, female offenders shew to much less advantage than men.

As regards their chances of being robbed, defrauded, or assassinated, Londoners are in a favourable position. They have, generally speaking, to guard against the machinations of only seven dangerous persons in every ten thousand, as compared to nearly three times that number to the same population in rural districts. With respect to robberies we cease to wonder at their number when we learn that in a single year Londoners were so careless as to leave open over eight thousand windows, and to omit fastening more than double that number of street-doors.

We are constantly hearing of the increase of insanity consequent on the high pressure under which are habitually carried on the various avocations of life. Some fourteen thousand insane patients we learn were admitted into asylums of all kinds in England and Wales during one year, rather more than half of whom were females. By far the most prolific source of insanity appears to be intemperance, especially among the male sex. Bodily disease and old age come next on the list, and then domestic trouble, of which, as might be supposed, females are the greater sufferers. Business anxieties on the other hand claim some male victims. Taking domestic trouble, adverse circumstances, and mental anxiety as inclusive of the ordinary strain of everyday life, we find that females have rather the worst of it under these headings; while in cases of insanity caused by overwork the male sufferers are in the majority.

In turning from this subject to a consideration of mortality, we find that the external causes of bad health have been defined as being reducible to seven great classes. These are—atmospherical variations; physical accidents; organic poisons; errors in feeding, drinking, and breathing; parasites or foreign living organisms infesting the body; occupations and modes of life; nervous or mental impressions. It has been observed by a scientist that of the twenty-four million eight hundred and fifty thousand people into which the English community was divided, the healthiest class was the professional; and then follow in order of healthfulness the agricultural, the domestic, the commercial, and the industrious classes. It is among children under five years of age however, that occurs the greatest amount of mortality; and in fact the mortality of young infants is known to be in such a deplorable state as to require much study and thought for its solution.

With reference to occupations and their tendency to shorten life, the value of fresh air as a preservative of health is instanced by the fact that the rate of mortality among grocers is considerably less than that among drapers. The disease which destroys the draper is pulmonary consumption. While the grocer bustles about his business with the shop-door open all day, the draper lives in a close place with the shop-doors for the most part closed, and breathes

moreover a dusty close atmosphere. The heat and closeness which are the general characteristics of drapers' shops, account for the generally unhealthy appearance of the attendants in them. Publicans—who as a class are very comfortable, well housed, clothed, and fed, and not obliged to go out in all weathers—should, it will be thought, compare favourably with other tradesmen as regards longevity. Such however, is not the case, for we find that, in spite of all these advantages, they die so much faster than the rest of the people, that in England a hundred and thirty-eight publicans die in proportion to a hundred of the whole of the community who are employed in seventy leading occupations. With respect to seafaring men, whether we have to thank Mr Plimsoll or not, it seems that deaths by drowning in the British mercantile marine have sensibly diminished during the last three years, though there appears to be a full average of diseases from disorders caused by poor Jack's reckless intemperance. It may here be mentioned on eminent medical authority, that the mortality in large hospitals is in prodigious excess of what it ought to be; due, it is said, chiefly to overcrowding, consequent on want of space in cities like London.

#### PICTURES FROM AN OLD ALBUM.

I HAVE been to-night looking over a crowded photographic album, embalmed with the memory of people and places I have known. This valued repository is full to bursting. It is battered and old-fashioned too, this ancient album of mine. One of the clasps has clean gone, and the other hangs down despondingly, and looks as if it were about to start in search of its departed colleague. To the stranger my collection must seem a curious hodge-podge of art, suggestive of past times and fashions. The Darwinian disciple desirous of studying the development of species as applied to dress, would find an interesting field in this venerable album. It is a milliner's repository, where you can trace the stages of fashion from that primitive period of photography when ladies wore cavernous bonnets, voluminous shoulder-of-mutton sleeves, and dresses that were all body, to the more sophisticated season when bonnets are not bonnets, sleeves seem to suffer from extreme scarcity of material, and dresses have no bodies at all; from the days of crinoline and wondrous circumference of dress to the present time, when ladies affect felt-hats, cravats, stand-up collars, waistcoats, and double-breasted ulsters. It is a tailor's sheet of style, from when gentlemen flourished in tall cylindrical hats that atoned for towering height of crown by abnormal narrowness of brim, and coats with collars as extravagant as horses', and black stocks supporting a white wall of linen stiff enough to decapitate the wearer, to the current days, when gentlemen, adjusting the balance of fashion with ladies, part their hair in the centre, wear stays, and have hoods to their winter coats, and muslin veils to their summer hats.

The present and the past are however, linked

together in something more than mere sartorial bonds. I seldom notice the contrasts of dress as I turn over the pages of this cherished old album

In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

Those faded photographs of places and persons are connected with days of health and happiness, and recall 'old familiar faces' such as Elia missed. That careless coterie of college chums has the interest of a romance. Care's iron ploughshare has driven its remorseless furrows across those youthful faces since the sunny afternoon when the artist arranged the group. Two have left for the Promised Land, one is carrying English civilisation into Japan, another has gone to Queensland, and another to the bad; he who secured University distinction in the Mathematical Tripos is now a Royal Academician with a *penchant* for painting Eastern faces; while the one whose forte was the dead languages is now a prosperous City oilman. Here too is a picnic party seated on the green margin of a Scottish lake whose shimmering sheet of water mirrors the giant back of one of Sir Walter's mountains.

The views of places are unfailing indexes to the volume of recollection. That sixpenny cardboard is fragrant of Hampton Court; a sunny dream of the wooded reaches of the Thames above Richmond,

With indolent fingers fretting the tide,  
And an indolent arm round a darling waist.

This bit of Bonchurch brings back the history of autumn days in the Isle of Wight. That scene from the Orme's Head is the key to a great storehouse of pleasant memories of North Wales. This view of Peel Castle sends me wandering in Manxland; that vignette of St Aubin's Bay despatches my memory to Jersey's leafy lanes; while here is a faded photograph of Rubens's 'Descent from the Cross' which bears me away to sleepy old continental towns, the paradise of painters, the arcadias of art.

Here is a *carte-de-visite* view, ever so many months old, of Windermere; yet it recalls the holiday afternoon of long ago as if it were but yesterday. I sit on the slope of a fell that repeats its rocky form in the mere beneath. Wooded creeks and pretty bays and green islands and poetical promontories give a picturesque variety to the shape of the lake. Right away below me a pearly vessel of gauzy cloud floats like gossamer through the water, until it is shattered on a cruel ridge of rock; twinkling in the sunshine quite a mile away is a yacht, whose snowy sails look like the feathers of a stately swan; while near the mountainous head of the lake a black bar of smoke is eloquent of the passage of the fussy tourist-steamer. Verdurous, soft, low hills shelter the shore; but away in the purple perspective is a grand company of mountain giants, crowned with coronets of clinging cloud. The weather is all smiles and tears; Nature laughs and weeps alternately. Now the sun sulks behind a gray mass of cloud. Ethereal mountain outlines are blotted out

at a stroke from the picture; fairy islands dissolve; the reflection of hanging oaks and sycamores fades out of the water; the placid liquid plain is black and ruffled. Then there is suddenly a soft smile in the sky, and lo! a bar of light travels from tree to tree along the wooded shore, and a great burst of sunshine brings back the full brilliancy of the picture. The enchanted islands again 'blush at the thought of their own loveliness'; the green again glows in the glancing water; lake-side villas glitter among the trees; the distant mountains sketch in their shadowy shapes. The clouds have blown away, and the lake is like a great flashing diamond in an emerald setting, with grim mountain sentinels to insure its protection.

I do not know how to account for it; but I never see this portrait of Harry —, in shooting-coat and leggings, as he leans on a breechloader, without seeing a moorland picture—a Derbyshire moorland, full of changing lights and shadows—an ocean of heather, which the breeze stirs in tides of rippling purple. Great grim rocks of limestone here and there island the swelling sea; and a distant shooting-tower supplies the illusion of a lighthouse. Tramping over the heather, right away to the edge of the moorland world, is a deep valley with steep wooded slopes above, and the hills of the Peak beyond; a solitary mountain glade, shaded by hanging foliage, and silvered by a tinkling trout-stream, tumbling over shallows of fallen rocks into deeper pools beyond, almost hidden by the jealous greenery of the musical trees. A kingfisher—a feathered fragment of rainbow—admires its own breast, reflected feather for feather, tint for tint, in the liquid looking-glass. A thousand forms of light and life are to be met with in this moorland glen. Wild-flowers and ferns and tall grasses that would captivate a Linneus; plump trout and artistic flies that would gladden an Izaak Walton; and birds that would send a Yarell into ecstasies. The wildness of the scene tranquillises while it invigorates. There is society in its solitude. The silence is made musical by the brook, which now sighs, then laughs, and anon brawls in its course; and by a sweet duet by feathered choristers in the mass of woodland—the soprano, a blithe thrush; the contralto, a mellow-voiced blackbird. But what is that disturbance among those cranberry bushes? Whir-r-r and cur-ru-u-ck! and Harry's breech-loader has brought down a mass of fluttering feathers before I have time to ask the question.

Who is the proprietor of the next face we come to? It is the portrait of 'Levi,' an honest Cleethorpes fisherman, who pressed his likeness on my acceptance. Cleethorpes! A little breezy bit of the east coast. It is not a watering-place. Fashion visited it, and dubbed it 'slow,' and so the place remains little more advanced than it was fifty years ago. It is true that its architectural appearance is embellished by a big hotel; that it supports a family of hypochondriacal bathing-machines, that stand up to the knees in sand, surveying the water in such a melancholy manner that they might be contemplating suicide; and that there is an ornamental pier jutting out seaward, with a brass band which endeavours in vain to drown the dreamy music of the waves. But with even these drawbacks, a more peaceful spot than Cleethorpes is not visited by the tides

of the German Ocean. It is a paradise for pot-terers, a locus-eating retreat on the very borders of the busy world. I am living a life of emancipation from the exactions of etiquette. I have no Mrs Grundy to frown upon my careless unconventionalisms. I have not to dress three or four times a day in order to promenade to the strains of operatic selections; and I am happy. Half-farmer and half-fisherman, I have captured the conger-eel in his native haunts, and am seriously thinking of taking lessons in the noble art of milking cows. I am living at a mariner's cottage. The sea-sand comes up to the front-door, and I walk straight from my couch into Neptune's bath; while at the back-door is a wide-spreading heath, where I lie and watch the clouds above sailing like argosies of pearl in an azure ocean. My nose is a rich ruby red; a lurid crimson sufficiently warm in hue to lead an apostle of the pump to pick me out and present me as 'A Frightful Example.' But nevertheless the Bardolphian brilliancy is due entirely to atmospheric not alcoholic influences.

My next photograph depicts a pair of west-country ponies; 'Valentine and Orson' we used to call them. In that phaeton I once was taken one of the pleasantest of cruises upon wheels. The day comes back. It is the silvery spring-time. The sun lights up the face of Someone even more than her own dark flashing eyes, as we drive through the sober streets of Gloucester for a trip round about the Cotswolds. Gloucester is soon left behind; Gloucester, where the tall masts of merchantmen many miles from the sea grow up among the trees, and are so mysteriously mixed up with the houses as to suggest to a stranger unacquainted with the wide water-way of the Sharpness Canal, the idea that a huge tidal wave had burst over the land, and left the ships high and dry on the streets; Gloucester, with its noble cathedral, and its dream of ancestral trees and monastic precincts, and clamorous rooks holding a profane service in the shaded square; with its famous cricket-fields wherein grew the Three Graces; with its turbulant river, the colour of coffee covered with scald-cream, like the salmon-stream in Canon Kingsley's *Water Babies*.

We are now fairly in the country—sunshiny, breezy country. King Sol is shining resplendently. A bright shimmering pulsation of light pervades everywhere, glorifying everything. Our way leads past pleasant fields, and sleepy clusters of cottages that seem to apologise for the absence of established villages; past woods where the soft zephyr is whispering to the budding trees to wake up to fuller life, for the freezing winds are over; past blooming orchards, that are pictures gleaming with colour. The air is filled with the jubilant choruses of feathered songsters, the drowsy tinkling of sheep-bells, the bleating of lambs, the hum of bees, the perfume of lilacs, the scent of opening flowers. Swallows are wheeling about in mystic flight; young birds are making trial-trips with their newly fledged wings. The lustrous trails of the laburnum trees hang over crumbling walls, like Danaën showers of gold. The sunshine invests the aspects of nature near and far with a poetic fancy. The scenery grows wilder. Great masses of woodland block the view. Overhead is an archway of green; the sun streams through the delicate veil of luminous leaves, and



throws on the white road a trembling tracery of light and shade, a fairy filigree-work of foliage. We skirt romantic valleys, and investing hills that are painted against the serene sky, and send out spurs of mountain-height right away to the margin of the meadows. The road becomes steeper, winding between slopes of feathery ferns and foxgloves and wild-flowers, and overshadowed by banks of billowy foliage that tower to ambitious heights. We walk up the hill to relieve the ponies; and climbing the sandy road, pick the pale primroses out of the mossy bank-side, and the blue-bells that give us a little nod of recognition, and the ox-eyed daisies that stare at Someone with quite a rude glare, and the trembling anemones that hide modestly among tall grasses. There is a quiet hotel perched on the summit of the hill. We lunch at mid-day near the edge of the wind-swept lawn. The view below is like a dream of scenery. It bursts upon us a sweet surprise of landscape loveliness. It is like a piece of imaginative scenery. Someone utters a little plaudit of delight, and I am half induced to imitate the Cockney tourist who, on first beholding the beauties of the Bay of Naples, cried: 'Bravo, Beverley!' But the scene is one which none save the Great Artist could have painted; a picture that is an index to heavenly truth, an echo of eternal goodness.

The country is spread out like a vast carpet at our feet. We command a prospect such as Moses might have beheld when he stood on Pisgah's peak and viewed the Promised Land. Immediately below is the climbing roadway, an avenue under the trees; then hill and dale and forest mixed up in picturesque confusion; at the foot of the green mounds of grassy mountain is a reservoir-lake, fringed with foliage, and burnished by the dancing sunbeams until it resembles a plain of polished silver; then the peak gives way to the plain, and wide meadows, radiant with buttercups, stretch out to the wide Severn valley with its undulating pasture-lands and scattered farmsteads; and right away in the sunny haze is Gloucester's noble cathedral tower. It is a landscape to sit and drink in, to study with an artist's eyes, to contemplate under the changing shadows made by passing clouds, to carry away engraved in memory for ever. But the ponies are harnessed to the phaeton again. We have a six-mile drive all down hill by the side of the Cotswolds to Cheltenham, which lies in a green hollow tucked in by this western mountain range—to Cheltenham, a town of trees with streets fringed with foliage, and a princely avenue of branching limes and chestnuts.

I must close the album now, for I am coming to pages which had best be untuned. An album, although a receptacle of present joyous companions and beloved relatives, becomes too, alas! a cemetery of the dead, of which the photographs are the monuments. A mausoleum too of memories that it were wise to leave undisturbed; memories of broken spells and dead hopes and faded flowers; of bitter failures and futile successes and vain ambitions; of the sad illusions of wayward days; of aerial architecture, all superstructure and no foundation, bright towers of hope that fell with a pitiless crash, and buried the builder in their ruin; of friendships that were faithless, and lovers that were false; of that

'Lost Youth' which Longfellow so eloquently laments:

There are things of which I may not speak;  
There are dreams that cannot die;  
There are thoughts that make the strong heart  
weak;  
And bring a pallor into the cheek,  
And a mist before the eye.

#### OUR ROBIN.

ROBIN has been our constant visitor for the last six or seven years, not only during the winter but all the year round. He seldom fails to pay his respects once a day at least, and generally much oftener, seeming to regard himself as one of the family. When spoken to he always replies with a little song, and we fancy knows his name. Though nervous and very wary, he is not in the least timid. One day, when busily pecking his crumbs, the cat came into the room, and eyed him greedily. Instead of flying off in a panic, as I expected, Robin merely hopped to the arm of my chair and waited quietly till I put pussy out. His favourite fare is oat-cake crumbs, and some are always left for him in one particular place. Indeed a supply of oat-cake is always kept in the house just for Robin's consumption. He is passionately fond of butter, and will snatch it off our fingers. Once or twice I have got him coaxed to take it from my lips; but he does not half like these little confidence tricks, and decidedly prefers stolen butter. When butter is not to be had, he hops into the kitchen and makes away with morsels of tallow-candle. My brother once surprised him dragging a piece of candle up-stairs; it was rather a heavy burden and could only be got up one stair at a time; but Robin was very patient, and succeeded in carrying it to the top, where he hid it away among some flowers. One day he was fortunate enough to find a quantity of lard, and as he seemed to like it very much, a little was put in a cup and left beside his crumbs. For two or three days Robin was to be seen pegging away at the lard with great gusto, then he disappeared for a whole fortnight. Poor little fellow! he must have been very sick, for ever since—and that happened some years ago—he flies away if offered lard. He knows the difference at a glance between it and butter.

Last autumn, when hopping about the bedrooms Robin caught a glimpse of himself in a looking-glass, and thinking it must be another Robin, his jealousy knew no bounds. He would stand for hours before the glass singing defiantly, and flinging himself against it in a perfect fury, till he became quite exhausted. We had to keep all the looking-glasses covered at last. Then Robin, evidently jumping to the conclusion that Dicky was the hated rival, attacked the canary in his cage, sung him into silence, and altogether led poor Dick a sorry life for a few weeks, when his bad temper was diverted into a new channel. His mate began to pop in now and again for some crumbs. Robin strongly objected. Henny insisted

on having her own way, and got it too in the end, I am glad to say. Such scuffles as they had! They scratched and pulled each other's little brown feathers out with a will. Often on cold winter mornings I had to get up and put the quarrelsome pair out; and many a time I advised Henny to get a divorce. Perhaps she did not understand what I said. At all events, she paid no attention to my good advice; for about ten minutes after a battle-royal, I would see them both on the window-sill singing and making love to each other as though there never had been a difference of opinion between them in their lives.

But in spite of his temper, Robin is a very amusing and cheery little fellow, singing about the house on snowy days, looking as jolly as possible; a very Mark Tapley of a bird; and when spring advances, all his good-nature will return. When Henny's domestic duties keep her at home, Robin shews himself a most devoted husband; he carries her plentiful supplies of oat-cake crumbs, butter, bits of candle, and other delicacies of the same kind. And when he has to cater for the little ones as well, he is really to be pitied; so busy is he, that he neglects his toilet nearly altogether, and we have to be satisfied with hurried scraps of song. He gets quite fearless in his anxiety for his family, and will join us at breakfast and help himself to buttered toast without the slightest hesitation or invitation. It is no use to break off a piece for Robin; his way is to hop on the plate and peck off for himself what he considers the dainty bits. I have known him to come in five times during breakfast. At night, a window is left open that he may come in for crumbs when he pleases. Should all the windows be shut, Robin has a very pretty Open Sesame; he sits on the window-sill and sings loudly. Nobody can resist that appeal, as he knows from experience. And when he wishes to get out, he has a very effectual way of managing that point too, by fluttering about from room to room, uttering a little frightened 'Chick, chick!' And as we know the cat often lies in wait for him, some one rushes to the rescue at once.

When moulting, Robin both lodges and boards with us. He sleeps on the top of a wardrobe, or some other high out-of-the-way place. But his trouble once over, he rejoins Henny in their open-air lodgings. They seem to keep together all the year. But except a few surreptitious visits to the pantry in quest of butter, Henny takes no notice of us in the summer-time. When any of us go out to the garden, Robin is quite delighted, and sings out a welcome at once, and hops about doing the honours of the place very prettily. There is never any difficulty in recognising him; even strangers are attracted at once. But with all his winning ways and confidence in us, there is one secret Robin never will intrust to us, and that is where he has his nest. It is built in the same spot year after year, and every one about the house knows it; but Robin's distress is so great if we so much as look in its direction, that we all pass it by with averted eyes, and make-believe we have no idea he has got a nest. Of course we take sly peeps when both birds are out of the way. We get fonder of our pet

every year, and much anxiety is felt if he be absent even for a day, as we fancy he is beginning to shew signs of old age.

#### THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHEN Mr Crookes first brought out his radiometer he believed that the motion of the four-vaned whirlingig within the sphere of glass that protected it from the air was occasioned by the direct action of light. A discussion arose on the question; and other physicists, among whom was Mr G. J. Stoney, F.R.S. of Dublin, shewed by mathematical reasoning that the motion was due to the pressure on the vanes of the molecules of air or gas contained in the imperfect vacuum—the glass globe above mentioned. The question excited lively attention among scientific men everywhere; and they will perhaps be greatly interested, if not surprised, on hearing that Mr Crookes can now shew, that is, make visible the imprisoned molecules. This he accomplishes by means of an electric beam of light, and then it is possible to see that the movement of the molecules is precisely that which the theoretical investigators predicted.

By further research, Mr Crookes finds that long-continued exhaustion of the vacuum will produce a perfectly neutral condition of the molecules whether of air or gas, and of all kinds of gas hitherto tried. In this fact a new and important field is opened for philosophical inquiry. Within the vacuum, in the condition described, light is, as Newton said it was—emissive; hence there is opportunity for experimental comparison with the undulatory theory. From this it will be understood that Mr Crookes in his exposition to the Royal Society has laid before them a subject as full of promise as it is interesting.

Sir William Thomson has added yet another to his admirable inventions of philosophical instruments by producing a Machine for the Solution of Simultaneous Linear Equations, which, as is obvious, appeals to mathematicians, by whom alone it can be properly appreciated. To give an intelligible explanation of it to unlearned readers would hardly be possible; but an idea of its capabilities may be gathered from Sir William's description as read before the Royal Society. 'The actual construction,' he says, 'of a practically useful machine for calculating as many as eight or ten or more of unknowns from the same number of linear equations does not promise to be either difficult or over-elaborate. A fair approximation being found by a first application of the machine, a very moderate amount of straightforward arithmetical work suffices to calculate the residual errors, and allow the machine to be reapplied to calculate the corrections. . . There is of course no limit to the accuracy thus obtainable by successive approximations. The exceeding easiness of each application of the machine promises well for its real usefulness, whether for cases in which a

single application suffices, or for others in which the requisite accuracy is reached after two, three, or more of successive approximations.' A description of this remarkable self-correcting machine is printed in the *Proceedings* of the Royal Society.

Mr Raoul Pictet concludes an article on the Liquefaction of Oxygen with the remark that his investigations necessitated an unusually large number of experiments for the establishing of preliminary data, and these he obtained by aid of the Geneva Society for the Construction of Physical Instruments, who furnished him with apparatus worth fifty thousand francs, and thereby enabled him to work out results with perfect accuracy. He recommends that similar apparatus should be provided in all laboratories as an 'essential means for the study of the molecular forces. Who knows,' he asks, 'but what crystallisation and certain reactions may thereby be placed in peculiarly favourable conditions for further investigation?'

At their anniversary meeting the Royal Society gave their Davy medal to Messrs Cailletet and Pictet for their discovery that oxygen, hydrogen, and other so-called permanent gases could be liquefied or solidified. We have already described the experiments which led to this discovery; their interest, as the President of the Society remarked in his anniversary address, 'is only equalled by the importance of the fact, now absolutely demonstrated by those experiments, that the property of molecular cohesion is common to all bodies without exception.'

In the same address the President announced that the Council of the Society, legislating prospectively, had abolished the admission fee now payable on election into the Society, and had reduced the annual contribution from four pounds to three pounds. This concession to the cause of science by the foremost among scientific societies, deserves to be placed on record.

At the anniversary meeting here referred to, Mr William Spottiswoode was elected President of the Royal Society, in place of Sir Joseph Hooker. The new President has long been known for his mathematical and physical researches.

The President of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Chemical Society in his session-opening address mentioned that he had observed the effects of the combustion of coal, that is the presence of sulphuric acid in the atmosphere, at distances from large towns far greater than might have been expected. 'At five miles it can be distinctly traced, and with certain winds it is found in the country even ten miles from the Tyne.' After making allowance for imperfection of experiment, 'it is now admitted that sulphuric acid from coal is in far greater quantity in the air than either hydrochloric acid or sulphuric acid passing off from alkali-works, and that it must necessarily affect to a serious extent the growth of all vegetation within its reach.' Mr Mactear of Glasgow, estimating the quantity of coal consumed annually in Great Britain at one hundred and fourteen million tons (in round numbers), shews that more than a third of that weight passes into the atmosphere in the form of oil of vitriol.

Another subject mentioned in the address was the manufacture of very pure sulphate of soda by the direct application of sulphurous acid to common salt. But scarcely is this process in work

than a manufacturer in France introduces another, 'which consists in the decomposition of salt in the form of brine, by ammonia and carbonic acid, and the production of a very pure carbonate of soda, which is now extensively used in glass-works and other operations where colour is important.' A firm at Northwich, Cheshire, who have adopted it, produce about twelve thousand tons of soda-ash yearly, which is satisfactory for a process still in its infancy, but which 'appears as if it might prove an important rival to the old method of working, and its practical application would point to the probable future of the soda-trade as being near to the salt brines.' But here a consideration arises: if gas-works are to be superseded by the electric light, the present supply of ammonia would be stopped, and to make up the deficiency would be difficult and costly.

The separation of silver from lead has been effected by hand-labour; but is now substituted by applying steam 'as an agitator in the pot where the crystallisation of the pure lead takes place, and in other respects it produces a chemical change, and facilitates the work.' Another process separates the silver 'by means of zinc, which is found to wash the melted lead entirely free of the silver contained in it, and the mixture of silver and zinc floats to the top of the pot and is skimmed off. When this is completed, the mixture of zinc and silver is placed in plumbago crucibles in a furnace, and the zinc is distilled off and collected in small metal chambers, where it cools in the form of cake-zinc, and is fit for use again.' By this means about half of the original zinc is saved, and it is thought that the other half may be recoverable.

A new method of manufacturing white-lead deserves a word of notice. Very finely ground litharge is subjected in a mixing vessel to the action of salt brine, and chloride of lead and caustic soda are produced. 'This mass is then run into an iron vessel, into which carbonic acid is pumped, causing a further chemical change in the production of carbonate of lead and common salt once more; and the latter being washed out from the white-lead, may be used over again in the first operation. The patent white-lead produced in this way appears to be very white and chemically pure, but is not quite so heavy as the white-lead made by the old process.'

In the *Journal* of the Chemical Society a compound is described for the preparation of what may be called safety envelopes. That part of the envelope covered by the flap is treated with a solution of chromic acid, ammonia, sulphuric acid, sulphate of copper, and fine white paper. The flap itself is coated with a solution of isinglass in acetic acid; and when this is moistened and pressed down on the under part of the envelope, a solid cement is formed, which 'is perfectly insoluble in acids or alkalies, in hot or cold water, and in steam.'

At one of the iron-works in France a contrivance has been introduced for combining hot air and superheated steam in puddling-furnaces. The grates, the sides of the fire-boxes, of the ashpit, and all the hottest portions of the apparatus are connected with air-chambers, which are so supplied with vapour as to increase their durability, and at the same time supply an ample quantity of air for the draught, heated to a temperature of

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from four hundred and fifty to five hundred degrees. By means of this elevated temperature it has become possible to apply superheated steam under the grate, and effect an important saving by its decomposition.

At Boulogne it has been found that a dough made of sawdust and flour is a good coating for preventing the escape of heat from steam-pipes, cylinders, and other exposed surfaces connected with steam-machinery. Its cost is moderate, and it may be applied with a trowel.

Water is said to be much better than fire for the heating of tires preparatory to shrinking them on a wheel. In a fire the heating is irregular, and consequently the shrinking; but if a tire be boiled in water ten minutes, it will be of uniform temperature and will contract uniformly upon the wheel. Moreover the boiled tires are not so liable to crack or become loose as those heated in the fire.

Of late years meteorologists have observed that there is at times a remarkable similarity in the barometer curves all over the globe. In discussing these facts, Mr J. A. Broun, F.R.S.—to whom the Royal Society have awarded a Royal medal—inquires whether there may not be other causes of varying atmospheric pressure than a change of the mass of the air; in other words, whether the attraction of gravitation is the only force concerned in barometric oscillations. The answer has not yet been given; meanwhile observers have set themselves to watch these waves of pressure, which are quite distinct from the changes in local pressure produced by storms. Mr Russell, astronomer at Sydney, N. S. W., tells us that the waves travel across South-eastern Australia at from twenty to fifty miles an hour. They always travel from west to east, and so rapidly that their crest appears all over the colony on the same day. 'Such a rapid translation,' says Mr Russell, 'seems to point to some external cause; and on comparing Sydney barometer curves for 1873 with those of Greenwich for the same year, I was struck with the number of coincidences in the character of the curves. In many cases the points of elevation and depression occur on the same day at both places, and in some instances the curves follow the same form for more than a month.'

Here arises an interesting question. What is it that produces on occasions a loss of atmospheric pressure at the same time in each hemisphere? Mr Russell suggests that it is the heat of the sun acting intensely on the equator, and thereby giving rise to an influx of cold air from the polar regions. It is well for meteorologists that they have questions of such importance to engage their attention. Australians will co-operate: in Sydney a weather-map has been published daily from February 1877; and the other colonies, who now exchange meteorological information, will not be slow to follow the example.

Mr Buchan of the Scottish Meteorological Society remarks, in discussing the effects of low temperature, that during December, January, and February the mortality among females rises to 112 above the average, but to not more than 78 per cent. among males. As yet there are not sufficient data to decide 'how much of the excess is due to sex, how much to occupation, and how much—say, to their boots and other fashions.'

And further he states, that a 'comparison of the meteorological with the mortality returns shews in a striking manner the influence of particular types of weather in largely increasing or diminishing the number of deaths from particular diseases. Periods of unusual cold for instance, combined with dampness in the end of autumn, have a proportionally increased mortality from scarlet and typhoid fevers; of cold with dryness in spring have an increased mortality from brain diseases and whooping-cough; of cold in winter have an enormously increased fatality from all bronchial affections; and of heat in summer present a startling and, in many cases, an appalling death-rate from bowel complaints.'

Dr Hassloch of New York, in the course of researches 'On the Structure and Growth of some Forms of Mildew,' found that 'the grayish-white patches occurring in the mouths of infants, known as *thrush*, contain, besides epithelia, very delicate granules in active dancing motion—micrococci; short, single or double oscillating rods—bacteria; delicate threads, straight or variously curved, sometimes resembling chains—leptothrix; and finally oidia. After being kept forty-eight hours in a moist chamber, the mass removed from the mouth shews a number of delicate mycelia, the hyphæ of which have small sporangia. This vegetation,' as Dr Hassloch states, 'is identical with that of mildew. The oidia correspond in size to those of wine; many contain large vacuoles, in all details like those obtained from beer and wine, differing only and slightly in the colour of the shell.'

Favoured by the authorities at Constantinople, Dr Schliemann is again busily excavating at Troy; and Mr Rassam has permission to dig anywhere in Mesopotamia. With such a comprehensive grant, districts will be opened that have not hitherto been searched, and we shall hear of fresh discoveries at Nineveh, of explorations in the long hidden ancient city of Assur, and of endeavours to find the famous royal 'record office,' or 'Babylonian Bank' as some Assyriologists call it, in which were stored a large collection of mercantile tablets, representing the monetary transactions of a firm trading in the name of Egibi and Sons. It is curious to have bills for corn and fruits, and woven goods, and invoices and vouchers from the days of Nabu-palassar and Artaxerxes in the form of baked clay; but they are to be seen at the British Museum. The Arabs and Jews from whom they were obtained have kept the secret so well that the place in which they were discovered is not yet known to Europeans.

Kutha, now a group of great mounds, was the sacred university city of Babylonia, and had an extensive library, which is frequently referred to in mythological tablets discovered in other parts of the kingdom. It was from that storehouse of learning that the tablets giving an account of the creation were originally taken; and it is hoped that discoveries of other documents not less interesting will there be made.

In the mound of Nebbi-Yunus, search will be made for the palace of Sennacherib, in the expectation that some records of the latter years of that monarch may be found, 'and possibly some accounts, however meagre, of the second campaign against Hezekiah.'

But besides all this, Mr Rassam will make explorations in the country of that ancient people, often mentioned in Scripture—the Hittites. The existence of mounds along the bank of the Euphrates has long been known; and under a certain group known as the mounds of Jerabolus, it is supposed that Carchemish, the Hittite capital, lies hidden. Inscriptions in an unknown character were found in that neighbourhood a few years ago; and it is hoped that some key thereto may be met with in the course of the excavations now to be undertaken, and furnish to scholars the link wanting to connect Assyria with Western Asia. As the firman granted to Mr Rassam extends over a number of years, we may trust that the interesting enterprise will be carried to a successful issue.

Among the announcements made by the Royal Institute of British Architects one is that they have enlarged their Register, and opened it to architectural assistants, improvers, pupils, clerks of works, and to young architects desirous of becoming known to members of the Institute through their drawings or other testimonials; and architects in want of assistance as enumerated are invited to avail themselves of the advantage thus offered. The fee for registration is one shilling.

Of papers to be read before the Institute during the session there are—On Remains of Buildings in Midian, by Captain Burton; On the Vaulting and Stalactites of Persia, by Mr C. P. Clarke; On Lighting by Electricity, by Mr Horace Jones; and On the Connection between Ancient Art and the Ancient Geometry as illustrated by the works of the age of Pericles.

#### NEW YEAR 1879.

COME, cease your plaint; one year has fled,  
Another comes anon;  
We trust he'll bring us better cheer  
Than he that's dead and gone!  
For death and sorrow marked his path;  
His face was dull and drear;  
We'll try to think of him no more;  
God send a good New Year!

New Year! you cannot give us back  
The dear ones that are gone,  
Nor e'er restore to us the hopes  
We thought were all our own;  
Nor bring to wretched, ruined homes  
Comfort, and joy, and cheer;  
But yet—time softens everything—  
God send a good New Year.

It seems like only yesterday  
Since last with glee we said:  
'A Happy New Year to you all!'  
Some dear ones since are dead.  
We'll try to keep firm, patient hearts,  
Though oft they sink with fear,  
To think what sorrow may be ours  
In this—the good New Year.

But come! The morning dawns again,  
The darksome night is by;  
Perchance the New Year may be kind,  
No clouds may veil our sky.  
We'll gather up what joys are left,  
Content that Love is here:  
God bless us all, whate'er betide,  
And send a good New Year!

JESSIE C. HOWDEN.

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2d. To insure the return of papers that may prove ineligible, postage-stamps should in every case accompany them.

3d. MANUSCRIPTS should bear the author's full Christian name, surname, and address, legibly written.

4th. MS. should be written on one side of the leaf only.

5th. Poetical offerings should be accompanied by an envelope, stamped and directed.

*Unless Contributors comply with the above rules, the Editor cannot undertake to return ineligible papers.*

*Next Saturday, January 4, 1879, will be commenced in this JOURNAL, a NOVEL, entitled*

YOUNG LORD PENRITH.

By JOHN B. HARWOOD,

Author of *Helena, Lady Harrogate, &c.*

#### END OF FIFTEENTH VOLUME

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